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most confident of their re-established reason, and most importunate to be liberated, are the least of all to be trusted. Celsus made the remark formerly, and it may now be considered an aphorism in mental disorder.* On the contrary a good deal of reliance may always be placed in those, who acknowledge their infirmity, and reason calmly upon the degree of self-command, which they find it necessary to assume, in order to resist the impetuosity of their disease. I remember to have heard from Dr. Fox, when I had the pleasure of seeing his excellent private establishment near Bristol, about two years since, that he was now and then visited by a country gentleman, possessed of considerable property, unfortunately subject to periodical insanity, who discovered the approach of his disorder by certain signs, and always resigned himself voluntarily to the Doctor's humane care, until he found himself so far recovered that he could with propriety trust to his self-government. He was generally restored in a few months; and then took his leave, to resume his occupations, or amusements in the country.

When a lunatic appears sufficiently recovered, he is given to understand, that in consequence of his good behaviour he may be allowed to spend the day, with some of his friends, out of the hospital; but, that he must punctually return at a certain hour; and, if the master should hear any complaints of him, whilst absent, that he must again suffer the punishment and indignity of being confined with the most outrageous, or to his own cell. This threat has a very powerful effect, and is attended with the best consequences.

But, notwithstanding the wisdom and humanity of these regulations, there is still much wanting in the public lunatic asylums, to make them as perfect, as such establishments might be constituted, without a much more

complicated plan. It is not the least defect in St. Luke's and Bethlem that they have no regular mode of separating the convalescents from the furious, except by confining the latter, injuriously, to their cells, whilst their more peaceable neighbours are suffered to parade the galleries close by the very doors, liable to all their abuse and preposterous language. Pinel, the enlightened physician of the hospital de Bicetre in Paris, is very precise in his observations upon this subject, and relates the case of a musician, who "at the commencement of his convalescence, once expressed himself as if he had a confused recollection of his favourite amusement. His violin was brought, and his recovery was advancing by it. But, *about that time*, was admitted into the asylum, another maniac, who was exceedingly furious and extravagant. Frequent rencontres with this new comer, who was permitted to ramble about the garden without restraint, *again unhinged* the musician's mind, and overwhelmed its returning powers. The violin was forthwith destroyed; his favourite amusement was forsaken; and his insanity is now considered as confirmed and incurable—"an instance adds Pinel," equally distressing and remarkable of the contagious influence of acts of maniacal extravagance upon the state of convalescents; and a strong proof of the necessity of *insulation*. *Vid. Pinel Sect. 88.*

THOS. HANCOCK.

London, May 2, 1810.

To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.

GENTLEMEN,

ON the arrival here of your Magazine for February last, I was astonished to see in it a most scurrilous and unmerited attack upon the character of one of my fellow students. It is contained in a paper entitled "a Letter to a student at College," written by some person who signs himself S.E. from Bullinahinch.

As this attack has been publicly made through your Magazine I trust that you will give me liberty through the same medium, publicly to repel it. In this, you will do justice not only to the person against whom it was intended, but to the whole body

* Neque credendum est, si vinculus aliquis, dum ligari vinculis cupit, sanum jam se fingat; quamvis prudenter et miserabiliter loquatur, quoniam is dolus insanientis est."

Corn. Celsus, de medicina lib. iii. cap. xviii.

of the Irish students, who feel themselves included in it, and at the desire of a number of whom, I at present write.

"It seems," says S.E. in his letter, "some of our Irish bards attending college this season are ambitious to string Erin's lyre in the academic groves of Caledonia. To publish poems by subscription savours too much of an attempt to obtrude upon the world what the author fears would not obtain circulation by its native merit." This is a gross misstatement. The work to which he alludes was not published by subscription, though if it had, it certainly would, by no means, have detracted from its merit. Some of the finest works of genius which our language affords have been made public in this way. S.E. must be possessed of an amazingly bad memory, not to have recollected this. How in the name of wonder, did he forget the manner in which Pope published his immortal translation of Homer? How did he forget that the Scotch are proud to confess that it was the liberality of their subscription that drew the brilliant genius of Burns from the shade? None will ever attempt to ridicule this method of publication, but such as are conscious that any effort of their own to bring their productions to the light by it, would be unsuccessful.

But it is time to give an account of the author whom S.E. so ungenerously attacks, and of the work concerning which he has published such an unjust representation. The author, Mr. Editor, is one whose name is not wholly unknown to a great number of your readers. It is almost needless to say that it is Mr. M'Henry, whose publication entitled the "*Bard of Erin, &c.*" which appeared in your town last Spring, and met with a great deal more than ordinary encouragement from his countrymen. I understand that it is now out of print, but I hope that the author will soon oblige the world with another edition. Shortly after he came hither, at November last, it was known to some of the students, that he had in manuscript, a beautiful little poem called "*Patrick*," a tale founded on incidents that took place in Ireland during the unhappy period of 1798,

he was requested to publish it, but declined, as he thought it would draw too much of his attention from his professional studies. He was, however, unwilling to deny any favour of this kind to his countrymen. He therefore put the manuscript into the hand of one of the students, to whom he resigned his right to an edition of 1000 copies. Accordingly, that student published it on his own account; but previously to its appearance, some handbills were circulated, not with a view to collect subscriptions, but merely to advertise the public that such a thing was going forward. The printer, either mistaking the design, or thinking it would be an improvement upon it, added of his own accord, to the end of the advertisement contained in the handbills, the expression, *subscriber's names*, and as the students were forward enough to show their zeal in patronizing the work, I believe that a considerable number of them actually set down their names. The publisher however, made no use of this, for though, in consequence of the author's popularity among the students, and of the excellence of the poem itself, in less than a month above 700 copies were sold, not one of them was required to be taken on account of having been subscribed for.

These are the simple facts with respect to this publication, the success of which, I suppose, has excited the envy of S.E. to endeavour in an illiberal and abusive, but I am convinced in the most *unsuccessful* manner, to make an unfavourable impression concerning it on the minds of such of your readers as may not have had an opportunity of seeing it.

It is Mr. Editor, in defence of the judgment of a most respectable and enlightened class of men, that I have now the honour to write; for not only the students, but the ablest among the professors themselves, have expressed their warm approbation of this work.

It is difficult to say whether the misrepresentation of the fact, from which S.E. takes occasion to attack Mr. M'Henry's person, or the indecency of the attack itself, be the more reprehensible; I am sure that there

is not one of your readers (who understood the allusion) except S.E. that did not turn with abhorrence from that paragraph. A man may be excused for being a stupid writer, as it is probably a natural defect, that he cannot remedy, but there can be no apology for his being an indelicate and unfeeling one, since it evinces a moral depravity, for which he is himself accountable. If the manners of men were too refined, even as far back as the days of Queen Ann, to endure the ill-bred reflections of Dennis upon the person of Mr. Pope, surely S.E. could intend nothing else, than to insult the more improved manners of the present times, if he expected that the public would approve of a similar conduct in him towards Mr. M'Henry.

The circumstance of which S.E. has made such an unmannerly use, is simply this: In consequence of an accident with which Mr. M'Henry had the misfortune to meet, when a child, he has ever since laboured under a weakness and slight curvature of the spine, which, besides causing him to be a little below the common stature, sometimes occasions a considerable deal of uneasiness.—Shortly after his coming hither, Dr. Jeffray, who soon discovered his mental endowments to be above the common rate, took an interest in his welfare, and struck out the plan of an instrument which, by being worn round the body, the Dr. thought would tend to relieve this last inconvenience. Dr. Jeffray is confessedly one of the most eminent characters of which the medical profession at present can boast. It is not therefore surprizing that Mr. M'H. entered into his views, in this affair, especially as they afforded him the prospect of his more comfortable enjoyment of life.

* As to the publication which he

so disrespectfully mentions, it is my opinion, that it will be read and admired centuries after the very best of his productions are forgotten. It is not at present my intention to enter into a particular review of its merits, but I am persuaded, that no

discernment. If I had been the writer, I would have substituted, in the place of that paragraph, the following critique, or, call it what you please, on Mr. M'Henry's poems.

"As to the publication, which S.E. disrespectfully mentions, it may be said of it, as of all the rest of Mr. M'Henry's poems, that it is not destitute of some of the excellences of genuine poetry. We discern in these poems a considerable strength of imagination; the delightful effusions of a tender and feeling heart; perspicuity, simplicity, and, in some places, beauty of language; and also a good degree of smoothness and harmony in the versification. If they are not to be placed among the first poetical productions of the present age, they are, at least, above mediocrity. If Mr. M'Henry, as a poet, does not shine with a splendor, equal to that of a Scott, a Campbell, a Cowper, a Burns, and others; he at least diffuses a mild lustre, which attracts admiration, and gives him a distinguished place among our Irish bards. We see in his poems, genius struggling with difficulties and infirmities. But, on this account, we should not attempt to extinguish real sparks of genius, where they appear; but should rather endeavour to elicit them. It is the duty of the real critic to display the beauties, as well as to detect the faults, of any good poetry, which deserves criticism. The best of poets are not free from blemishes. *Homerus aliquando dormitat.* And every poet should be obliged to any judicious critic, who, while he points out his defects, cherishes the expanding blossoms of fancy, and defends them against the surly blasts of envy and detraction. Mr. M'Henry cannot suppose that his poems are faultless. We cannot expect to find in them the sublimity and majesty of Milton, or the vivid colouring, and descriptive painting of a Thomson. Such geniuses seldom appear; but we may, perhaps, find in the poems, to which we allude, something like the tenderness of a Shenstone, and other genuine marks of pastoral poetry. S.E. therefore, was wrong in throwing out indiscriminate censures, without distinctly marking either beauties or defects." AMICUS.

* In this paragraph there is, perhaps, rather too warm an approbation of Mr. M'Henry's publication, joined with too severe a reprobation of S.E.'s performances. Indiscriminate censure, or applause, cannot give any pleasure to persons of refined taste and

person of a feeling mind can read it without being affected, and if he be an Irishman, he will be doubly so. From the whole of his remarks it is plain, that he has either not seen the work, that he endeavours to depreciate, or if he has seen it, that he has not been able to detect any blemishes in it; for if he had, he has shown disposition enough to have taken every advantage of them; but he has not noticed one, in either its plan, language, or ideas. From this circumstance your readers will form no very favourable opinion of his candour. He calls his unfounded, ill-conceived, and ill expressed invective, a *Criticism*, but in what respect it is so, I cannot imagine; indeed he seems himself to have been aware that the public would not of themselves discover it to be a composition of such dignity as a criticism. He therefore with great sagacity, takes care that they should not be mistaken, and plainly informs them that it is one.—In this he has successfully, though stupidly enough imitated the device of the man who after having painted the figure of a cock, found it to be so badly done, that he was under the necessity of painting the word *cock* over it, in order that the spectators might not mistake it for some other animal.

I cannot conclude without recommending it to S.E. that, for the future when he wishes to abuse any person's character in a public manner, he should inform himself more accurately than he has done in the present case, concerning the facts upon which he intends to build his animadversions. If he do not, he may depend upon it, that he will always be equally unsuccessful.

AN IRISH STUDENT.

Glasgow, April 3d, 1810.

To the Proprietors of the *Belfast Magazine*.

ON THE COMPATIBILITY OF JUDGMENT AND FEELING.

GENTLEMEN,

THE following reflections may be thought by some of your readers not quite uninteresting, at least if like me they shall consider them as forming part of a philosophical

inquiry into the nature of man; and your inserting them, may have the further good effect of inducing some more able writer to favour us with his thoughts upon the subject.

Whether a mind endowed with extreme sensibility, can also possess strong judgment, or whether the man of feeling, will not be hurried by the impulse of that sensibility into actions in which judgment has little share, is a point on which various opinions have been entertained. To enter into all of them, with the reasons that may be adduced in support of each, would carry me far beyond the limits of either my time or abilities. I shall therefore confine myself to a few observations; namely, that I have myself known several persons in whom both those seemingly opposite qualities have been united, and who to the strongest judgment on every conjuncture, have added the greatest warmth and delicacy of feeling. The reason of this seems to be, that as judgment is a quality of the understanding, sensibility the offspring of the heart, these two may exist, either together or separately, having no necessary connexion, nor being necessarily exclusive of each other. Those who suppose sensibility and strength to depend in some measure on the nervous system, may contend, that the same conformation of the nerves cannot produce both, and that in some instances they may be deemed physical rather than moral relations, but that judgment is not the effect of any merely animal property whatever, is pretty evident from its being often found in persons of the weakest constitution, neither does genuine sensibility seem to have any dependence on the state of the nerves.—That morbid species of it which is frequently observed in people who are subject to nervous complaints, being generally confined to what regards themselves and their own sensations alone, and being totally distinct from that sensibility which is, “tremblingly alive all o’er,” to the sufferings or enjoyments of others, true sensibility is seldom affected by selfish considerations, it is when the welfare of our fellows is at stake that its strongest emotions are excited, and